Spec Grp File

26 March 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Notes on Special Group Meeting, 26 March 1963

1. [98 Low-level reconnaissance of Cuba. Comparative result of high-level versus low-level photography were demonstrated by Mr. Lundahl. After considerable discussion, it was decided that the matter would be held in abeyance for a week pending further developments on the Donovan matter. In general, Gilpatric's attitude was against low-level on the basis of Defense intelligence needs, but would agree if State felt periodic low-levels would establish "right of access". Johnson expressed general objection at this time. McCone expressed two prevailing viewpoints within CIA, but recommended proceeding with low-level. Bundy agreed to put the matter to higher authority for final decision. McCone suggested he was willing to accept responsibility for further delay.

Action: Matter to be reconsidered each week.]

2. [98 Reconnaissance of Indonesia. State, Defense, and Bundy all opposed overflying Indonesia. McCone recommended we support the British effort and it was agreed that the matter would be put to higher authority for decision.]

3. [98 Monthly Report of NRO was reviewed. McCone reported in detail on the failure of recent CORONA shots; specifically referred to failures of January, February, and March, and the fact that November and December were not usually productive of good photography. He advised Special Group that new estimates of Soviet capability could not be made until the Fall, rather than in June and July as is customary. He advised that the next flight was scheduled for Saturday, 30th of March, and it will be a standard CORONA. Gilpatric reported that adequate emergency back-up arrangements were being made, and delays of a type occurring in the last 90 days would not be recurring.

McCone reported the difficulties incurred with the U-2 generators and brushes and the fact that this had caused a standdown of flights in the Far East, but not in Cuba. Condition was reported as having been corrected and the North Korean, North China flight is on a weather alert.]

3/mc

4. The two papers from the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs on sabotage operations and additional covert programs were returned for consideration by the Cuban Affairs Committee. It was noted that the Cottrell Committee had not acted on these papers. The procedure adopted was for Cottrell Committee action and recommendations in much the same way that we now get Ambassador endorsement of covert activities elsewhere. There was a general concensus that actions against Cuba shipping would not be final although it would be an irritant, since plan called for damaging and making ships inoperative rather than destroying them. Several details of the additional Covert Action Program were discussed. The paper is to be revised and reviewed by the Cottrell Group.

5. Col. Steakley reported on the results of several recent Elint missions, and Elint destroyer operations in the Far East and Elint operation into the Baltic. Dr. Scoville reported on the Chasse operation.

6. Question was raised as to the results from overflights over Laos.

> Action: I would like a thorough briefing on this as I have heard nothing on this.

7. It was reported that SAC seriously questioned CIA's conclusion that the SA-3 sites in Russia are low-level intercept ground-to-air missile sites. Apparently SAC has prepared a report on this. Gilpatric noted the March 18th CIA memorandum reaffirming our conclusions.

> Action: DD/I must pursue this matter and explore with SAC their reasons for questioning our conclusions. This is the second time in weeks that these conclusions have been questioned. Advise me.

JAM/ji

3/mc

26 April 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Special Group (5412) meeting, 25 April 1963

Attended by Bundy, Johnson, Gilpatric, McCone

1. CIA weekly report on our activities was reviewed without comment. No requests were made. No actions are needed.

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2. [Extensive discussions of DCI's recommendations for low-level reconnaissance of Cuba. Gilpatric raised the question of political consequences. Johnson responded that Mr. Hughes had submitted a paper to him indicating the Soviets would take a harder line under these provocations. He reported that Thompson appeared to feel that low-levels would be used as a basis to halt withdrawal and possibly intensify the situation in Laos and elsewhere and that our interests would be adversely affected. I took the position that intelligence requirements were such that low-levels must be continued. It was agreed to go to higher authority with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense present. Arrangements were made for a meeting about 6:30, 25 April.]

3. Mr. FitzGerald presented the proposed new covert policy toward Cuba, reviewing the situation and specific operations in considerable detail. The Group were impressed with the planning. They were not prepared to act, and suggested the matter be discussed with higher authority, and also that action be withheld until the Standing Group had further deliberated on the question.

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4. [Covert action in the Congo was discussed. Bronson Tweedy reported briefly. The CIA proposal was approved.]

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5. [The proposed feint operations of GROSBEAK were discussed in some detail. Colonel Steakley suggested this operation might prejudice their ELINT operations. However, it was agreed that the exercise would be undertaken during the May dark-of-the-moon period and the results reported back to the Special Group prior to reaching a decision for reaching approval of continuing operations. Jorgenson was instructed accordingly.

ACTION: CIA is authorized to undertake this operation; it should be watched carefully, reported accurately and fully, and brought before the Special Group at the time we're considering the June operations.]

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6. The status report on the Italian elections was briefly discussed. Approval was expressed on the manner in which this had been handled. Apparently, the political observers on Mr. Bundy's staff views coincided with those reported by the Rome Station.

98.

7. McCone reported on the proposed plan for the April 30-May 1 meeting on British Guiana. Mr. Bundy and Mr. Johnson expressed the view that it was important that the strike be continued. They were concerned that it might be settled prior to May 30 and CIA was instructed to look into this and jointly with MI6 take such action as might be indicated as desirable to ensure the continuation of the strike. Mr. Bundy expressed the view that the $10,000 a day figure in the CIA paper would be cheap if a continuation of the strike for a protracted period would ensure the fall of Jagan and the destruction of his political support.

> ACTION; McCone should discuss with Helms and, if desirable, to arrange for a discussion with Fulton by Cline or by McCone in Paris over this coming weekend.

JAM/bd (tape)

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11 April 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Special Group (5412) Meeting, 11 April 1963

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1. [Reconnaissance of Laos and North Vietnam was reviewed. The Group expressed approval of the CIA program. They authorized two flights over Laos and North Vietnam on the assumption that one of the NEFA flights would cover the extreme western targets desired by Sarit. If, on the other hand, the four India - Communist China border flights were not executed at this time, then CIA was authorized to fly three flights over Laos and North Vietnam to cover all of the targets desired by both Sarit and COMOR.]

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2. [Status of negotiations for India - Communist China reconnaissance was reported. It was agreed that this question should be pursued further by CIA. No immediate action was indicated. Dr. Scoville reported that no further information would be forthcoming from either India or Thailand until about the 20th of April.]

3. Cuban operations. The proposed infiltration-exfiltration operations, past and projected, were reviewed and approved. The proposed program of sabotage and harrassment, both the general program and the detailed plan, was discussed at length. It was reported by Mr. Bundy that this program was developed more or less at the direction of higher authority. It was not the intention of higher authority to approve and authorize specific actions; what he was seeking was detailed information concerning our capability and what might be expected on a series of operations which were within our capability. I took the position, which was supported by Alexis Johnson (somewhat less vocally, however) that I questioned the advisability of proceeding with the program until we had crystallized the total policy designed to remove the Soviets from Cuba and also remove Castro. I said I was not clear as to how this was to be accomplished, nor did I feel that there was any agreed series of actions designed to meet this end objective. Therefore, it appeared to me that we are projecting a few of the annoying operations, none of

2/mc

which would permanently impair the facilities under attack nor would they seriously impair Castro's economic or military posture and, hence, serve no useful purpose. Furthermore, I estimated that under the laws of averages, a number of the teams would be rolled up and they would as they had in the past attribute the whole thing to the U.S. Government and the CIA. Since we had stood down the ALPHA 66 and others, more or less disenfranchised ourselves from the Cuban colony in Miami as a result of the Miro Cardona incident, we would have no plausible denial and in fact would find ourselves in a rather difficult position. It was agreed this matter should be further studied and reported on next Thursday, and possibly discussed with higher authority on Friday. An important part of this issue is the SNIE now under preparation which has to do with the future of Castro.

ACTION: I should discuss this subject with General Carter and some of the Senior Staff on Friday morning to prepare an agreed CIA position and also to schedule the completion of the SNIE.

4. North Vietnam monthly report was accepted.

98

5. [The funds for Kong Le were approved. However, Alexis Johnson was asked to go back to Ambassador Unger with an insistent message that Phoumi support Kong Le with money now in which came from the United States. However, if this appeal failed, the support recommended in the paper should be given for a limited period of time.]

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6. [The covert annex to the Bolivian internal defense plan was remanded because the Special Group (CI) had remanded the basic internal defense plan. However, there was no objection expressed to the annex but it must not be construed that the Special Group approved any subjects covered in the annex.]

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7. [The Colombian internal defense plan was not considered.]

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8. [Colonel Steakley submitted a report on inadvertent overflights by reconnaissance since 1 January 1961. This report was noted. DCI raised the question as to why he had not been informed. Apparently this was an oversight as written procedures had been established by Colonel Steakley for prompt informing of all members of Special Group when instances of this type occurred. Apparently, Alexis Johnson was]

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[informed by Colonel Steakley's office and he was under the impression that I was informed. However, he was on leave and therefore did not know that I had not been informed.]

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9. [British Guiana situation was opened up for discussion and placed on the agenda for next week. Alexis Johnson reported on Mr. Burdette's position, substantially parallelling Helms', with the effect that he was disappointed in the British position, that he felt time had run in favor of Jagan, and they would like an appeal made to Macmillan. Bundy took exception. McCone stated that CIA felt much as Johnson reported and furthermore objected to the British plan to involve CIA in its own political actions which would be attributable both whether they succeeded or failed. It was agreed to place subject on agenda for next week.]

ACTION: Subject should be carefully reviewed by staff.

JAM:bd

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SECRET [illegible] ONLY

24 May 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Special Group 5412 Meeting - 23 May 1963

1. After general discussion the North Viet Nam paper as presented by Colby was approved with the exception of Item b. State took the position that work with isolated ethnic groups in North Viet Nam should not be undertaken unless specifically approved by the Department. Defense raised the question of more extensive operations than anticipated by CIA and indicated that the JCS had developed a plan which would be submitted to the Secretary of Defense and then to the Special Group. I raised the question as to whether the General Harkins command working with the South Viet Nam army could conduct truly covert operations north of the 17th parallel, pointing out that if such actions were attributed to either the United States or the South Viet Namese, then the North Viet Namese with their substantial military organizations could retaliate against the South Viet Nam with punishing consequences. The JCS plan was not formally presented. No actions were taken ~~either~~ although it is expected that it will be presented in the near future.

ACTION: General Carter has had this matter under consideration with Admiral Riley. We should receive and study the JCS plan immediately upon its approval.

2. Defense indicated that the Army have developed plans for large-scale operations against Cuba involving sabotage. No presentation was made however the Special Group was advised that such a plan would be forthcoming.

3. Plan for disposing of the 14,000 sacks of sugar in Puerto Rico was discussed. I explained the actions being taken by DDP under FitzGerald's direction and indicated the sugar would probably be sold by the Soviets to a New York sugar broker who would in turn sell it to a non-U.S. port. The 800 bags in question would be disposed of.

4. I reported the current status of British Guiana as outlined in the attached paper.

ACTION: Mr. Bundy asked that Mr. Helms follow British Guiana closely and keep in close communication with me and with him.

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5. [The probable position of the Nenni Socialists at their July Congress was discussed.

ACTION: CIA was requested to explore the possibility of political action at this time designed to influence a favorable decision by the Congress concerning the Party's support of NATO and the West as contrasted with the taking of a neutral position. As an alternate possibility, it was suggested that the Party might be influenced to refrain from making support of NATO an issue on which the Government might be brought down. Such a course would make it possible for the Christian Democratic Party to conduct its support of NATO even though the CD are closely associated with the Nenni Socialists.

McCone stated that Mr. Karamessines would report on this matter at the earliest possible time.]

98

6. [After a brief discussion on conditions in Haiti, Mr. Bundy stated that NSAM ______ would be issued and would impose on CIA certain responsibilities for covert action among exile groups.

ACTION: CIA should immediately study the prospect of creating an exile group around dependable leadership, prepare a plan, estimate of cost, and a forecast of success of intervention in Haiti and make specific recommendations on course of action if one is indicated. Care should be taken not to initiate action until policy has been agreed upon at appropriate levels of Government and of higher authority. Under no circumstances should a course of action by tied to a particular date or be otherwise] inflexible.]

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7. [After a brief discussion of the overflight problem in India, Special Group urged that CIA seek an appointment with Amb. Bowles prior to his departure in order to acquaint him with the background of this program, the history of the attitude of the Indians, the current status and all other dimensions of the problem so that he will be fully informed upon his arrival in New Delhi and will not necessarily be prejudiced by the views of Amb. Gailbraith.]

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SECRET [illegible] ONLY

27 June 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Special Group Meeting - 27 June 1963

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1. [In connection with the scheduled monthly overflights, Johnson brought up the question of overflights on Laos and North Viet Nam, stating that he understood the COMOR requirements for Laos had been completely filled and nothing was left over, but there was a requirement for one flight on North Viet Nam. McCone answered he was not sure but would check up. It was agreed that any unfilled requirements on Laos would be taken care of.]

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2. [Reference use of ChiNats in North Viet Nam, this is O.K., providing the use is part of a South China mission which then passes over North Viet Nam, because weather conditions permit, and then exits. State would not agree to a straight North VietNam-La os flight flown by ChiNat pilots because of the political implications if anything happened.]

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3. [The program for Labor Training in Spain was O.K.]

4. The Cuban program was reviewed by Mr. FitzGerald and was approved. McCone brought up the question of extensive coastal defenses being built up by the Cubans as evidenced by the arrival of new PT boats and advised the Group that we must plan contingent methods for evading such coastal defenses. Also McCone stated that he had asked for a review of all reports for the last 90 days because of his continuing concern over the large number of unexplained reports we are getting on Cuba which indicates some ominous situation might be developing.

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DCI

(CLASSIFICATION)

Handle Via Indicated Controls

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[BYEMAN]

WARNING

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This document contains information referring to Projects:

(CLASSIFICATION)

1/mc

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Special Group (5412) - 8 August 1963

Present were: McGeorge Bundy, Mr. Gilpatric, Alexis Johnson, General Carter and Paul Eckel

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1. [Reconnaissance Requirements for Current Contingency in the Far East

The requirements for overflights were approved subject to the following:

For the Sino-Indian border when a base becomes available. Bundy wanted to know if we were ready for a high-level approach to Nehru. I asked him to hold off until we had taken a better reading and our team had returned. As to the Mainland of China, to include Manchuria, Bundy did not want to go near the Soviet border and felt that 10 or 15 miles was entirely too close. He had no objection to anywhere over the Mainland of China providing we kept well clear of the Soviet border. I told him that if we did this we would not be meeting the requirement to keep track of anything occurring on the Sino-Soviet conflict along the border and the general consensus was that we could do without this type of reconnaissance rather than run the risk of an incident. The Group established a "bank of two" missions for operations against Laos, north of the 17th parallel, and against North Vietnam. There appeared to be no problem about replenishing the bank when it was drawn down. The mission against Laos south of the 17th parallel was approved. The mission for covering North Korea was approved as a high priority requirement subject only to the return of Secretary Rusk.]

2. Cuban Operations of August

Mr. FitzGerald briefed the Special Group along the lines of his briefing notes (SAS 63-481 of 7 August). Everything was approved except that State had an opportunity to reclama the sabotage operations if they felt the need--Johnson said he would know definitely by Sunday (presumably thinking that Rusk may have had some private conversations with Khrushchev that could indicate the need for soft pedaling actions in Cuba).

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3. [The covert action project for Bolivia was approved.] 98

4. [Matt Baird put on a fine briefing on CIA counterinsurgency training. Bundy indicated he would reassure the Attorney General and I do not think we will have any further problem as to outside inspections or overseeing of our training program.] 98

5. There was no discussion of the minutes or next week's agenda.

6. [I reported on the high-level coverage of Cuba in accordance with the Reber memorandum, and I also gave them a briefing of our U-2 carrier operations to include the pornographic pictures.] 98

M. S. C.

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19 JUL 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Special Group 18 July 1963

PRESENT: Mr. McGeorge Bundy
Mr. John A. McCone
Mr. Roswell Gilpatric
Mr. U. Alexis Johnson
Mr. Thomas A. Parrott
Mr. Desmond FitzGerald

1. The undersigned was present at this meeting only for the brief item on Cuba which involved the final decision whether or not to postpone the two external sabotage operations planned for 26 July. Mr. Bundy referred to the fact that the Agency representatives had previously stated that they would prefer, in terms of the morale of the case officers and agents, to have a decision to postpone made at the earliest possible moment rather than to have such a decision reached at the last minute. Mr. Bundy stated that in light of this he felt it reasonably certain that Higher Authority would consider that negotiations in Moscow were proceeding in a sufficiently favorable manner to warrant a postponement decision at this time. Mr. Bundy said that if the undersigned did not hear from him during the course of the day Higher Authority's decision to postpone could be assumed. Mr. Bundy further said that it was only fair to warn that there might be a resumption of Moscow negotiations at a later date -- perhaps August -- and that these resumed negotiations might in turn call for postponements. (Mr. Bundy did not call and the operations have been postponed until approximately the 15th of August.)

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

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2. On the morning of the 19th of July the undersigned called Mr. Bundy and confirmed this fact and said that a field message now indicated the possibility of an internal sabotage operation to take place on the 26th. Mr. Bundy said that such an operation would be perfectly acceptable and that the only bar was on "across water" operations. Mr. Bundy also added that Higher Authority asked him to convey to us the fact that Higher Authority, in reaching the decision to postpone, was well aware of the morale problem that might result among the Agency case officers and therefore had considerable difficulty in reaching the decision. Mr. Bundy authorized the undersigned to quote Higher Authority accordingly to any staff personnel concerned and to add that Higher Authority retains his enthusiasm and interest in the program.

Desmond FitzGerald
Chief, Special Affairs Staff

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30 AUG 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Special Group 29 August 1963

PRESENT: Mr. McGeorge Bundy
General Marshall Carter
Mr. Roswell Gilpatric
Mr. U. Alexis Johnson
Mr. Thomas A. Parrott
Mr. Bruce B. Cheever

1. Mr. Johnson opened the discussion of the paper "Support of Autonomous Anti-Castro Groups" (i.e., Support to Commandos L) by commenting that he was under the impression that Mr. McCone had indicated at the last Special Group Meeting that he would look into the proposal further and that Mr. Johnson wondered what his views now were.

2. Mr. Cheever was not able to express Mr. McCone's personal views on this matter, but pointed out in general terms the reasons why we considered the proposal desirable as a supplement to the already approved program. Further discussion centered on the question of the use of British territory and the possibility of attribution of the raids to the United States. No mention whatsoever was made regarding the question of attacking Cuban ships. After an inconclusive discussion, Mr. Johnson reiterated his desire to hear Mr. McCone's personal views on the proposal. Mr. McBundy concurred and the question remains open until the next Special Group Meeting.

3. Mr. Cheever has the distinct impression that State continues to be completely opposed to this proposal and hopes Mr. McCone will "shoot it down" for them, whereas it is believed that Defense will concur but will not "front-run" the proposal. Mr. Bundy appears open-minded on the matter.

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downgrading and
declassification

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4. Mr. Cheever briefed the Group on the operation to remove and destroy the "Streatham Hill" contaminated sugar. The briefing covered the chronological details from initiation of negotiations for purchase until completion of the dumping of the sugar at sea. Identities of the various brokers, cover companies, etc. were not asked for nor revealed. The Group expressed its satisfaction with the operation. (Mr. Parrott had previously advised Mr. Cheever that Mr. Bundy did not desire a paper on this matter.)

5. The after-action report on the Casilda/Santa Lucia operations was briefly discussed. Mr. Johnson questioned the motives for the amount of material abandoned on the scene. Mr. Cheever commented that while it was unfortunate that the material had been left, it was explainable in terms of the reaction of soldiers under fire and especially those in their first fire fight. The Guatemala press release on "Commando Mambises" was favorably commented on by Mr. Johnson. Mr. Bundy asked about the comment in the after-action report that "One cannot predict what Castro's ultimate reaction or reprisal will be." Mr. Cheever stated some of the people who closely study Castro believed that he would be personally furious over the attacks and that one could expect more reaction than had appeared to date. In response to Mr. Bundy's question whether there would be additional operations of this type next month, Mr. Cheever advised that several were in the planning stage, but that until he talked to our people coming up from Miami this weekend, he could not be certain but that he doubted we would ask to mount any the next moon period. Mr. Cheever mentioned the cancellation of the scheduled South Coast Caching operation due to the Cuban alert, the execution of the three members of the DOGGO team, and the probable doubling of the ATHENA team. Mr. Bundy asked if the Attorney General had been briefed on Casilda/Santa Lucia. When advised to the contrary, he asked that this be done when the Attorney General returns to Washington next week (week of 3 September).

Bruce B. Cheever

BRUCE B. CHEEVER
Acting Chief
Special Affairs Staff

WE

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 23, 1963

SECRET EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL GROUP

SUBJECT: Covert Operations Against Cuba - Security Within the Government

As you know, in August the U. S. Government directed two "exile" raids against targets in Cuba. From the evidence now available, it appears that our security, with respect to U. S. participation in these operations, was excellent.

While there will always be public speculation as to the extent of U. S. involvement in raids of this type, I think we would all agree readily that it is important that there be only speculation, and no direct knowledge. Unfortunately, the maintenance of a high degree of security is not a simple matter in view of the numbers of people within the Government who have to know a little or much about a U. S.-directed raid against Cuba. For example, without counting CIA personnel and secretarial and staff personnel of other agencies, there were probably over 20 people in the Executive Branch who knew details of the August raids while many other people were generally acquainted with the U. S. involvement. Among others, the Navy knew where the attack boats were going; the Coast Guard, Customs, and INS knew about the "comings and goings" of the raiders; a few DOD people, who had to procure special equipment for the raids, could presumably surmise that something was going on somewhere; and a few intelligence watch officers and press officers were told, for their background, that the U. S. Government was aware of the raids.

I think there are two important, if obvious, security lessons we have learned from the August raids -- one, that it is in the nature of the problem that many people probably have to know something about such raids; and two, that these people apparently

can maintain adequate security. At the same time, in view of the truth that security leaks are more likely to occur when substantial numbers of persons are involved, it seems essential to me that we constantly convey the high importance of security to others who are privy to information about our covert activities against Cuba. May I ask that members of the Special Group take such steps within their areas of authority as they think appropriate, and may I in particular urge that the Central Intelligence Agency, as executive agent for these enterprises, emphasize the importance of security to all those with whom it has necessary business on these matters, so that we can maintain the high level of security set in these recent operations.

McGeorge Bundy

McGeorge Bundy